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Project. No: 2022-1-FR01-KA220-ADU-000086999

Module 6

Practical Tools with Sample Instruments for Experience Co-creation

Developed by BAWP



Co-funded by
the European Union



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LEARNING OUTCOMES

Knowledge:

- Understand the dynamics and methodology of design sprints in the context of tourism.
- Comprehend the importance and impact of storytelling in cultural representation and tourism marketing.
- Grasp the intricacies of service blueprinting to enhance the customer experience in tourism settings.

Skills:

- Execute design sprints to rapidly prototype and validate tourism experiences.
- Utilise storytelling to effectively communicate the unique cultural aspects of a destination.
- Develop detailed service blueprints that outline every aspect of the tourism experience, ensuring a seamless integration of frontstage and backstage activities.

Competences:

- Lead collaborative projects that integrate community insights into tourism products.
- Innovate and adapt tourism offerings to reflect authentic cultural narratives and sustainable practices.
- Evaluate and refine operational processes within tourism projects to enhance overall efficiency and customer satisfaction.



Duration: This module requires approximately 20 hours, including instructional time, hands-on activities, and project work.



MODULE IN A NUTSHELL

Module 6 introduces you to three transformative tools: Design Sprints, Storytelling, and Service Blueprinting. Each tool is designed to enhance your ability to create innovative and sustainable tourism experiences that are economically beneficial, culturally enriching, and environmentally respectful. Through a combination of theoretical learning and practical application, this module fosters a deep understanding of how to engage with communities to co-create meaningful tourism experiences.

INSTRUMENTS

6.1 Introduction to Design Sprints

Design Sprints are an innovative problem-solving process rooted in design thinking principles adapted for rapid idea development and testing. This method is highly effective in the context of regenerative tourism because it allows for quick, collaborative, and iterative exploration of solutions that align with environmental sustainability and community engagement goals.

Design thinking is a user-centred approach that helps deeply understand the needs and challenges of all stakeholders involved, including local communities and tourists. Its phases (Empathise,



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Define, Ideate, Prototype, and Test) serve as a roadmap for creating experiences that are desirable, functional, and viable in the long term.

The value of implementing Design Sprints in regenerative tourism, a concept that aims to leave places better than they were found, lies in their ability to rapidly transform ideas into actionable solutions continuously tested and refined through feedback loops. This dynamic approach is especially crucial in the tourism sector, where community involvement and sustainable practices are beneficial for the long-term viability and success of tourism offerings. By engaging local communities directly in the design process, Design Sprints fosters a sense of ownership and accountability among stakeholders, leading to more culturally respectful and environmentally sustainable tourism experiences. Moreover, this methodology supports the creation of innovative solutions that proactively contribute to the regeneration of local ecosystems and cultures. It encourages the development of tourism practices that restore and rejuvenate local environments and traditions rather than merely conserving them, thereby aligning closely with the principles of regenerative tourism.

6.1.1 Design Sprint Steps

Step 1. Empathise

Objective: To gain an empathetic understanding of the community, environment, and tourists who are the focal point of the tourism experience. This phase is about immersing oneself in the community and understanding the needs, desires, challenges, and aspirations of all stakeholders involved.

Activities:



- Conducting interviews with residents, tourists, and business owners.
- Observational visits to key tourism sites and community spaces.
- Participatory workshops where community members can express their views and share experiences.

Regenerative Impact: The “Empathise” step in Design Sprints is crucial to ensuring that tourism solutions align with and actively benefit the local community. By engaging deeply with community members and understanding their experiences, challenges, aspirations, and unique cultural and environmental contexts, this step fosters the creation of tourism experiences that are genuinely rooted in local needs and desires. This deep level of engagement helps to prevent the common pitfalls of top-down tourism development, which can lead to cultural dilution and environmental degradation. Instead, empathising leads to solutions that enhance community well-being, preserve cultural heritage, and protect and regenerate natural environments. This proactive approach to understanding and integrating local perspectives ensures that tourism development contributes positively to both the social fabric and the ecological health of the destination. As a result, tourism becomes a force for good, actively participating in the regeneration of the local area rather than merely extracting from it, which amplifies the overall sustainability and resilience of the community.

Step 2. Define

Objective: To synthesise the insights gathered during the Empathise phase into a clear, actionable problem statement that will guide the rest of the sprint process.



Activities:

- Data review sessions to collate and analyse information gathered.
- Problem-framing workshops to define the key challenges and opportunities in creating regenerative tourism experiences.
- Creation of "How might we" questions to open up avenues for creative solutions.

Regenerative Impact: During Design Sprints, the "Define" step is crucial in regenerative tourism. It focuses on the specific challenges and opportunities identified in the empathise phase. Defining these problems ensures that the solutions are targeted and effective in promoting sustainability and regeneration. This step allows project teams to set clear, actionable goals addressing real community and environmental issues. It shifts the approach from broad solutions to tailored interventions that can significantly impact ecological conservation and socio-economic development. This strategic targeting maximises resource efficiency, reduces waste, and ensures that every effort made contributes to the revitalisation and sustainable growth of the local area. Defining the right challenges is pivotal in turning empathetic insights into concrete actions that actively regenerate and sustain the community and its surrounding environment.

Step 3. Ideate

Objective: To generate a broad array of ideas that address the defined problem statements, encouraging creativity and out-of-the-box thinking.

Activities:



- Brainstorming sessions involving all stakeholders.
- Idea generation techniques such as mind mapping, sketching, and SCAMPER (Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Put to another use, Eliminate, and Reverse).
- Selection of the most promising ideas for further development.

Regenerative Impact: The "Ideate" step in Design Sprints is the creative engine for generating innovative solutions that positively impact the local environment and community. This phase is crucial for breaking away from traditional or outdated methods of tourism development, encouraging a brainstorming process that is unrestricted and multi-dimensional. By leveraging collective creativity and diverse perspectives, this phase enables the formulation of ideas that are not only environmentally sustainable but also culturally enriching and economically beneficial for local populations. Often, these ideas go beyond traditional tourism practices. Instead of exploiting natural habitats and cultural heritage, they focus on restoring and rejuvenating them. For example, proposals might include community-led eco-tours, heritage conservation projects funded by tourism revenues, or educational programs that involve tourists in local conservation efforts. Through such innovative ideation, tourism can be transformed into a catalyst for regenerative change, actively contributing to the health and vitality of its destination, thus fostering a more sustainable and resilient local ecosystem and community.

Step 4. Prototype

Objective: To transform the best ideas from the "Ideate" phase into tangible, testable prototypes. This could range from storyboards and wireframes to physical models or mock-ups of the tourism experience.



Activities:

- Rapid prototyping workshops where teams build simplified versions of their solutions.
- Development of digital or physical models that can be interacted with.
- Preparation of scenarios or role-play to simulate the tourism experience.

Regenerative Impact: Prototyping allows for creating and testing solutions in a controlled environment, turning abstract ideas into tangible models that stakeholders can evaluate. Prototyping visualises how tourism initiatives will function, making adjustments for better alignment with regenerative goals. This process refines solutions to ensure they contribute to environmental restoration and community empowerment before being implemented on a larger scale.

Step 5. Test

Objective: To validate the prototypes with real users—tourists, community members, and other stakeholders. This phase is crucial for gathering feedback and making iterative design improvements.

Activities:

- Organising feedback sessions with participants.
- Using surveys and interviews to gather detailed responses about the prototypes.
- Observing participants as they interact with the prototypes to identify any issues or areas for improvement.

Regenerative Impact: It is essential to test the tourism experiences to ensure they meet the goals and benefit the community and the



environment. This involves evaluating the prototype solutions with real users and stakeholders to gather feedback on their impact, usability, and acceptance. The testing helps identify any unexpected issues that could affect regenerative goals. It also ensures that the experiences appeal to tourists and locals and contribute to restoring local ecosystems and cultural heritage. This thorough process helps refine the offerings for the best results and ensures that the tourism initiatives foster ecological resilience and socio-economic empowerment, fulfilling their regenerative potential.

Case study: International Mavrud Day

International Mavrud Day is an annual event promoting the Bulgarian wine industry through a series of activities to enhance national and international awareness of Bulgarian wine. The event is a prime example of regenerative tourism as it leverages local viticulture heritage to foster economic growth, community pride, and cultural preservation. While the event is named after the flagship Mavrud variety, the organisers have understood that it will be better received if all the local Bulgarian grape varieties are also highlighted in the initiative. The initiative aims to promote Bulgaria as a wine country, highlighting regions for wine tourism and experiences and showcasing Bulgarian wine.

Application of Design Sprint Steps to International Mavrud Day: a step-by-step practical guide for implementing the Design Sprint methodology in regenerative tourism initiatives, using the International Mavrud Day (IMD) as a case study:

1. Empathise





IMD case: In the initial phase of International Mavrud Day, organisers deeply engaged with the community by conducting comprehensive surveys that aimed to gather a broad spectrum of opinions from local wine producers, community leaders, and past event attendees. The feedback focused not only on celebrating the Mavrud grape but also broadened to include other local Bulgarian grape varieties and emphasise Bulgaria's rich wine heritage. Specific concerns addressed were the lack of international recognition of other local varieties and the desire for a more inclusive celebration that highlighted the entire Bulgarian wine industry. This initial phase ensured that the event planning was deeply rooted in genuine community needs, fostering a regenerative approach to sustain and enrich local wine traditions and cultural identity.

User Tip: Start your project by engaging directly with the local community and key stakeholders. Use structured interviews or community gatherings to gather authentic feedback. Listen actively to understand the community's cultural and economic aspirations.

2. Define

IMD case: Utilizing insights gathered during the Empathise phase, the organisers outlined clear objectives for enhancing the event. These included elevating the international stature of Bulgarian wines, boosting local economies through increased tourism, and showcasing Bulgaria's wine diversity. A strategic approach was identified, emphasising the need for systematic planning and execution to ensure not only the celebration of the Mavrud grape but also to include other indigenous varieties, thereby enriching the event's cultural authenticity and ecological awareness. This step underscored



a regenerative framework that sought to revitalise and sustain the local wine industry and its cultural landscapes.

User Tip: Define clear, actionable goals based on community feedback. Ensure these objectives align with regenerative principles like sustainability, local economic enrichment, and cultural preservation.

3. Ideate

IMD case: This phase involved extensive brainstorming sessions with a diverse group of stakeholders, including wine experts, local artisans, tourism officials, and marketing professionals. Ideas generated included the launch of [Urban Wine Festivals](#), the creation of an interactive [website](#) featuring wine tourism opportunities, and the organisation of professional conferences and educational masterclasses. This phase was crucial for integrating a regenerative mindset, focusing on creating events that would not only draw attention but also actively contribute to the cultural and economic vitality of the local communities involved.

User Tip: Facilitate ideation sessions with a broad range of contributors to foster creativity. Encourage innovative ideas that promote local culture and environmental sustainability. Think beyond traditional tourism offerings to include activities that engage and benefit both locals and visitors.

4. Prototype

IMD case: The International Mavrud Day initiative commenced modestly, focusing initially on media engagement through a targeted Facebook campaign designed to gauge public interest and gather preliminary feedback. This was an essential first step in prototyping



the concept in a digitally accessible, low-risk environment. By the following year, the initiative had expanded to include a dedicated website facilitating [online wine tastings](#) with international experts who received wine samples beforehand. This phase also introduced [public online discussion involving Bulgarian stakeholders](#), enabling a broader dialogue and deeper engagement. The third year marked a significant scale-up with the addition of three urban wine festivals across different cities, an international conference, and specialised tours for media and international guests. Each iteration was carefully planned to incrementally test and refine the broader components of the event, ensuring readiness and effectiveness before their full-scale implementation.

User Tip: Implement your ideas on a small scale first. This could be a digital campaign or a local event. Use these prototypes to “test the waters” before fully committing to larger projects. Gather feedback and make necessary adjustments to align better with your regenerative goals.

5. Test and Implementation

IMD case: Rigorous feedback collection was integral throughout each phase of the initiative. After each event, organisers systematically gathered insights from stakeholders and participants through surveys and direct discussions, both during and after the events. This feedback informed continuous adjustments and enhancements to the program. Annual reviews analysed the successes and areas for improvement, ensuring that each subsequent iteration of the International Mavrud Day celebrations was more refined, inclusive, and aligned with the goals of promoting Bulgarian wine culture. This ongoing cycle of testing and refining helped solidify the event's



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reputation and expand its impact, ultimately contributing to its sustainability and effectiveness in promoting regional wine tourism.

User Tip: Create feedback mechanisms to capture insights from every event or activity. Use this data to refine your approach continuously. Ensure your tourism offerings resonate with participants and contribute positively to the local community and environment.





6.2 Storytelling

Storytelling is one of the oldest forms of communication and an intrinsic part of human culture and understanding. In the context of regenerative tourism, storytelling transcends mere entertainment - it becomes a strategic tool to engage, educate, and connect tourists with the destination in a meaningful way.

Storytelling in regenerative tourism is more than narrating tales; it's about creating a bridge between visitors and destinations that encourages respect, understanding, and preservation. By embedding stories into the tourism experience, destinations can enhance visitor satisfaction and contribute to the regeneration of cultural and natural resources. It serves as a powerful means to:

- Educate visitors about the ecological and cultural heritage of the destination.
- Foster respect and empathy among tourists towards local communities and environments.
- Inspire sustainable behaviours by showcasing the positive impacts of conservation efforts and community practices.
- Drive economic benefits by enhancing the visitor experience, leading to increased satisfaction and repeat visits.

Using storytelling in regenerative tourism helps transform the visitor experience from passive sightseeing to active, thoughtful participation.

6.2.1 The Storytelling Framework for Regenerative Tourism

1. Gathering stories



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Objective: Collect authentic stories from local communities, historians, ecologists, and other stakeholders that highlight the unique attributes of the destination.

Activities:

- Conduct interviews with community elders, local artisans, and cultural custodians to uncover historical anecdotes and cultural wisdom.
- Collaborate with environmental experts to gather information on local flora, fauna, and ecological practices.
- Organise storytelling workshops where community members can share their experiences, legends, and personal connections to the land.

Regenerative Impact: Storytelling is a powerful tool for engaging participants deeply in the tourism experience and fostering a profound connection to the local environment and community. By carefully curating and sharing authentic local stories, tourism can transcend mere observation, enabling visitors to immerse themselves emotionally and intellectually in the unique culture and natural surroundings of the destination. Effective storytelling not only educates but also evokes empathy and a sense of belonging, which are crucial for a regenerative impact.

To achieve this, the utilisation of specific tools and techniques is essential. Conducting interviews with local community members requires more than just asking questions; it involves creating a space where people feel comfortable and valued, encouraging them to open up and share their personal and collective narratives. Techniques such as active listening, empathy mapping, and appreciative inquiry can be





instrumental in these interactions. These approaches help interviewers connect emotionally with interviewees, ensuring that the stories collected are informative and resonate with genuine emotion and heritage.

Gathering local stories is intrinsically tied to highlighting the destination's uniqueness. It's about capturing the essence of the place through its people, traditions, landscapes, and biodiversity. This collected knowledge not only enriches the visitor's experience but also documents and preserves the irreplaceable cultural and ecological wealth of the destination, contributing significantly to its sustainability and resilience. By weaving these authentic elements into the narrative fabric of the tourism experience, operators can offer a more compelling and responsible exploration that benefits both visitors and local communities.

2. Crafting narratives

Objective: Develop engaging and coherent narratives that effectively communicate the collected stories to tourists.

Activities:

- Use narrative structures (e.g., [The Hero's Journey](#)) to organise stories into compelling arcs that captivate audiences.
- Incorporate sensory details and emotional elements to make the stories vivid and relatable.
- Align stories with the themes of sustainability and regeneration, highlighting the positive impacts of preserving culture and nature.





Regenerative Impact: In the context of regenerative tourism, well-crafted narratives serve as pivotal instruments for bridging the gap between visitors and local environments. By employing narrative structures such as The Hero's Journey, stories are shaped into engaging arcs that captivate audiences and mirror the cyclic nature of regeneration, highlighting challenges, transformations, and renewals inherent in the local context. These stories, rich in sensory details and emotional resonance, allow tourists to see beyond the surface of the destination, fostering a deep, empathetic connection with the place and its people.

The importance of aligning these narratives with the destination's identity cannot be overstated. Each narrative crafted should resonate with the intrinsic values and unique characteristics of the local area—its land, culture, and traditions. This alignment ensures that the storytelling entertains and educates tourists about the significance of preserving these elements. By vividly illustrating how the community interacts with and values its natural and cultural heritage, narratives can effectively promote themes of sustainability and regeneration. This approach enhances the visitor experience by providing meaningful insights and encourages responsible behaviour and support for conservation efforts, ensuring that tourism contributes positively to the destination's sustainability.

3. Integrating stories into the tourism experience

Objective: Seamlessly incorporate stories into various aspects of the tourism offering, such as tours, exhibits, and digital content.

Activities:



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- Train tour guides to effectively narrate stories, turning tours into immersive experiences.
- Develop printed and digital materials that tourists can access to learn more about the stories behind attractions.
- Create multimedia presentations, such as videos or audio recordings, that bring stories to life for visitors.

Regenerative Impact: The thoughtful integration of storytelling into the tourism experience can profoundly transform how visitors interact with and perceive a destination. A place's cultural and environmental heritage becomes tangible and dynamically engaging by weaving authentic narratives throughout tours, exhibits, and digital content. This approach enables visitors to connect deeply with the location, viewing it not just as a backdrop for leisure but as a living entity with stories, struggles, and triumphs.

Effective training of tour guides is crucial in this context. Guides should be equipped not only with factual knowledge but also with the skills to convey stories in a way that evokes emotions and provokes thought. This training should include narrative delivery techniques, pauses for effect, voice modulation, and engaging storytelling methods that ensure stories are not merely told but felt. For instance, guides could use the storytelling technique of 'scene painting', where they vividly describe the historical context of a site, allowing tourists to mentally visualise and emotionally connect with the past events of the location.

Additionally, multimedia elements like video documentaries or audio recordings featuring local narratives, music, and natural sounds can enrich the experience further. These tools help bring historical and cultural contexts to life, making the experience immersive and





memorable. For example, an audio guide might use the natural sounds of a forest to enhance the narrative of how local communities have traditionally interacted with and protected their natural environment, fostering a deeper appreciation and a regenerative relationship with the land.

By embedding these enriched narratives into the tourism experience, visitors are encouraged to adopt a more thoughtful and respectful approach towards the places they visit, contributing to the preservation and appreciation of local heritage in a manner that supports regeneration and sustainability.

4. Evaluating story impact

Objective: Assess how effectively stories enhance the tourism experience and contribute to regenerative outcomes.

Activities:

- Gather feedback from tourists on how stories have influenced their perceptions and behaviours.
- Monitor the engagement levels with storytelling-driven tours and materials.
- Evaluate the economic and social impacts of storytelling on the local community.

Regenerative Impact: Regularly assessing storytelling's effectiveness ensures that narratives enrich the tourism experience and contribute significantly to regenerative outcomes. This evaluation process involves gathering detailed feedback from tourists, which can highlight how stories have transformed their perceptions and encouraged more respectful and engaged behaviours towards the



environment and local communities. For example, surveys or interactive feedback sessions can be used post-tour to gauge visitors' emotional responses and any new understandings they have gained about the destination's cultural and ecological aspects.

Monitoring engagement levels with storytelling-driven tours and materials provides quantitative data on what captures interest and what may need adjusting. This could involve tracking the number of participants in story-based tours, the usage statistics of digital storytelling materials, and visitor interactions related to the narrative content on social media platforms.

Evaluating the broader economic and social impacts on the local community is also vital. This might include assessing increases in local employment opportunities due to heightened tourist interest, changes in residents' attitudes towards their cultural heritage, and enhancements in community cohesion as stories bring shared identities and histories to the forefront.

Storytelling strategies can be refined by systematically reviewing these aspects to maximise their educational and emotional resonance, ensuring they effectively advocate for ecological conservation and cultural preservation. This ongoing process bolsters the tourism sector's sustainability and reinforces storytelling as a powerful tool for driving community regenerative change.

Case Study: International Mavrud Day

In the framework of International Mavrud Day, storytelling emerges not merely as a method of engagement but as a vital strategy for educating audiences about local wine culture and advancing



sustainable tourism initiatives. This approach is crucial in cultivating a regenerative tourism experience that supports community well-being, environmental sustainability, and economic vitality. One of the narratives meticulously woven into the fabric of this event is the story behind its scheduling on October 26th, St. Dimitar's Day, which exemplifies the profound connection between local traditions and regenerative practices.

The selection of October 26th as the day of celebration pays homage to a century-old tradition upheld by Aristi Chorbadzhaikov, also known as Chorbadzhaika, a revered local winemaker renowned for his meticulous vineyard care and exceptional winemaking skills. Every year on St. Dimitar's Day, Chorbadzhaika would begin harvesting his vineyard, a ritual symbolising the deep-rooted respect for craftsmanship and the cyclical nature of life and agriculture. According to the folk calendar, this day heralds the onset of winter, making it a culturally resonant moment to celebrate the harvest and share the robust flavours of Mavrud wine with family and friends. By anchoring International Mavrud Day to this date and its accompanying stories, the event honours Bulgaria's viticultural heritage and promotes a regenerative ethos, emphasising the sustainability of cultural and agricultural practices that respect and revitalise local ecosystems and communities.

Applying Storytelling to International Mavrud Day:

1. Gathering Stories

IMD Case: Organisers of International Mavrud Day initiated a comprehensive research project to gather stories about the Mavrud grape and its wines. They conducted interviews with local



winemakers, historians, and viticulture experts, including significant contributions from academic research, particularly from the "Monograph of the Mavrud variety" by Professor Venelin Roychev. Additionally, the team explored cultural narratives and legends associated with Mavrud, enriching their collection with both scientific and folklore elements.

User Tip: Begin your storytelling process by conducting thorough research into your subject's historical, cultural, and scientific aspects. Utilise academic resources, local legends, and direct interviews with community stakeholders to build a rich, multifaceted narrative base.

2. Crafting Narratives

IMD Case: Using the diverse information gathered, the IMD team crafted detailed narratives that were informative and emotionally engaging. These stories were structured around key themes such as the historical significance of the Mavrud grape, traditional winemaking techniques, and personal anecdotes from notable figures like Aristi Chorbazhakov. These narratives were then showcased on the [IMD website](#), including a [special section on the historical and legendary aspects of Mavrud](#), which provided a deeper narrative context for visitors.

User Tip: Structure your narratives to connect emotionally with your audience. Use storytelling techniques such as narrative arcs that include challenges, climaxes, and resolutions to make the content relatable and engaging. Ensure these stories are accessible through various platforms, such as websites or printed materials, to reach a broader audience.





3. Integrating Stories into the Tourism Experience

IMD Case: Each element of the International Mavrud Day was infused with the stories collected. From the [website's interactive map highlighting local Mavrud wine producers](#) and their unique stories to guided wine tours that narrated the [historical significance of the vineyards](#), the narratives were seamlessly integrated into the event. Particular focus was placed on the story of the chosen date for the event, St. Dimitar's Day, linking cultural heritage with the celebration of wine, enhancing the authenticity of the experience.

User Tip: Leverage every aspect of your event to tell your stories. Train guides to deliver these narratives effectively, create engaging online content, and use storytelling to enhance physical experiences such as tours or tastings. Connect narratives to specific aspects of the event or location to enhance relevance and engagement.

4. Evaluating Story Impact

IMD Case: The impact of these storytelling efforts was systematically evaluated through visitor feedback and engagement metrics on the IMD website. The organisers collected insights on how the stories influenced visitor perceptions and interactions, using this data to refine and enhance the storytelling aspects continually. The success of the narrative integration was evident in the increased visitor engagement, particularly with the interactive elements like the map and the detailed historical anecdotes.

User Tip: Implement robust mechanisms to gather feedback on how effectively your stories are being received. Use both quantitative tools, such as website analytics and qualitative methods, like visitor surveys,



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to understand the impact. This feedback is vital for refining your approach and ensuring your storytelling remains dynamic and impactful, contributing to the regenerative goals of enhancing cultural appreciation and promoting sustainable tourism practices.



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6.3 Service Blueprinting

Service Blueprinting is a strategic tool used in service design to visualise the processes an organisation uses to deliver a service. It's particularly effective for detailing both the visible customer interactions and the invisible backend processes that support them. Service Blueprinting is not just about improving service delivery; in the context of regenerative tourism, it becomes a powerful tool for creating more sustainable, community-focused tourism experiences that respect and enhance the destination and its inhabitants. By meticulously detailing each step of the service process and its impact, tourism operators can craft experiences that truly resonate with the principles of regenerative tourism.

Service Blueprinting is particularly appropriate for regenerative tourism for several reasons:

- It provides a complete view of the tourism service, including front-stage customer interactions and back-stage operations, allowing for a holistic approach to service improvement.
- It helps identify specific areas where tourism services can be improved to enhance sustainability, reduce environmental impact, and benefit local communities.
- By mapping out all touchpoints, tourism operators can create seamless and deeply engaging experiences that educate tourists about sustainability and cultural respect.

Service Blueprinting is invaluable for:



- Identifying redundancies and inefficiencies in tourism operations and suggesting improvements.
- Ensuring that every step of the customer journey is thoughtfully designed to enhance satisfaction and engagement.
- Highlighting opportunities to integrate sustainable practices throughout the service delivery process.

6.3.1 Instructions for Implementing Service Blueprinting

1. Pre-Blueprinting preparation

Objective: Gather all necessary information and define the scope of the blueprint.

Activities:

- Conduct stakeholder interviews to understand different perspectives on the service process.
- Define the primary service to be blueprinted and determine the level of detail required.

Regenerative Impact: The initial phase of creating a Service Blueprint is crucial for shaping an approach that positively impacts the community. Different perspectives are considered by involving a diverse group of people during the data collection phase, especially those of local communities affected by tourism. This inclusivity helps in understanding local needs and aspirations, enabling the tailoring of services to enhance visitor experiences and benefit the community economically and socially. By defining the blueprint's scope and focusing on sustainability and community involvement, the resulting



service design meets immediate needs and contributes to long-term environmental stewardship and social unity. This methodical preparation supports the development of tourism services deeply connected to regenerative principles, aiming to leave a positive legacy in the tourism sector.

2. Mapping the Customer Journey

Objective: Detail every step of the customer's interaction with the service from start to finish.

Activities:

- List all customer actions in chronological order.
- Identify physical or digital touchpoints involved in each step.
- Note customer emotions and pain points at each interaction.

Regenerative Impact: Mapping the customer journey is a valuable opportunity to enhance each interaction within the service framework to align with regenerative tourism principles. By detailing every step of the customer's experience, including associated emotions and potential pain points, service designers can fine-tune interactions to improve the overall visitor experience and integrate effective educational elements about sustainability. At each touchpoint, whether physical or digital, efforts can be made to inform and engage tourists about local environmental and cultural conservation efforts. This strategic insertion of educational content helps raise awareness and inspire responsible tourist behaviours that support regeneration goals. Additionally, by identifying and addressing pain points, the service blueprinting process ensures that tourism services foster positive relationships between tourists and the local community,



enhancing mutual respect and understanding and contributing to a more sustainable and regenerative tourism ecosystem.

3. Identifying backstage actions and support processes

Objective: Map out internal actions and support processes enabling front-stage activities.

Activities:

- Link backstage actions to specific customer touchpoints.
- Include relevant employee roles, the technology used, and internal policies affecting each step.
- Assess the environmental and community impacts of these processes.

Regenerative Impact: Carefully identifying behind-the-scenes actions and support processes in service blueprinting goes beyond improving operational efficiency. It is a crucial opportunity to integrate sustainable practices within the tourism infrastructure. Outlining how internal actions support customer-facing activities allows for a thorough assessment of where and how sustainability can be systematically integrated. This involves evaluating the environmental impacts of these processes and their role in the community. For example, analysing the energy consumption patterns of support activities or the sourcing strategies for materials can uncover opportunities to use renewable resources or local products, thereby reducing environmental impacts and supporting local economies. Additionally, understanding the impact of these actions on local communities ensures that tourism development is ecologically sustainable and socially equitable. This approach promotes a



comprehensive rejuvenation of the tourist destination by ensuring that every aspect of the service delivery aligns with sustainability and community welfare principles.

4. Highlighting pain points and opportunities

Objective: Identify and address any issues or opportunities for improvement in the service process.

Activities:

- Use customer feedback and employee insights to highlight areas of friction or inefficiency.
- Identify potential for incorporating sustainable, community-oriented solutions.

Regenerative Impact: Identifying and fixing problems with the service makes operations smoother and considerably improves the potential for tourism activities to renew and grow. This method uses customer feedback and employee insights to find areas where improving things can lead to more meaningful and compelling experiences. It's also important because it creates opportunities to include sustainable and community-focused solutions into the service plan directly. For example, finding ways that resources are used inefficiently or places where customers aren't happy with things that also cause harm to the environment can lead to using greener practices or technologies that help the environment and make visitors happier. Also, this approach supports tourism development's needs of the local community, ensuring that it improves local well-being and takes care of the environment. By systematically dealing with these problems, the service plan enhances customer experience and actively helps the



destination's social, economic, and environmental renewal.

5. Iterating and implementing changes

Objective: Refine the blueprint and implement changes to improve the service.

Activities:

- Develop a plan to address identified pain points, integrating feedback from all stakeholders.
- Pilot changes in controlled environments before full-scale implementation.
- Continuously update the blueprint based on feedback and changing circumstances.

Regenerative Impact: The tourism service blueprint is designed to be adaptable and responsive to future sustainability goals and community requirements. The blueprint ensures that tourism offerings remain aligned with environmental conservation efforts and community well-being by including feedback from all stakeholders and piloting changes in controlled environments. This iterative approach fosters a regenerative tourism practice, where updates contribute to the holistic health of the destination and its ability to support both the local population and visitors sustainably.

Case study: International Mavrud Day

Using International Mavrud Day as a case study for Service Blueprinting demonstrates how detailed process mapping and continuous improvement can significantly enhance the effectiveness of a tourism event. Through this method, the event not only



celebrated Bulgarian wine culture but also championed the principles of regenerative tourism, making a positive impact on the environment, the community, and the local economy. This approach ensured that every aspect of the event was aligned with broader sustainability goals, creating a model that can be replicated in other contexts to promote cultural appreciation and environmental stewardship simultaneously.

Application of Service Blueprinting to International Mavrud Day

Service Blueprinting was employed to refine and enhance the delivery of the International Mavrud Day experience. By mapping out the service process, organisers were able to visualise and improve every aspect of the event, from public interactions to behind-the-scenes operations.

1. Mapping the Customer Journey

- **Objective:** *Begin with an online awareness campaign using stories of local winemakers and the historical significance of the Mavrud grape. Progress to event engagement and conclude with post-event feedback collection to gauge impact and gather insights for improvement.*
- **Touchpoints:** *Include detailed steps such as the initial website visit, where users can view interactive maps and choose from different events, proceed to reservation with clear, informative content about what to expect, and engage during the event with QR-coded information stands that explain sustainable viticulture practices. Post-event: direct attendees to digital platforms to share their experiences and suggestions.*



- **User Tip:** Design your website and ticketing process to be informative and user friendly, ensuring that each digital touchpoint is an opportunity for education about local culture and sustainability.

2. Identifying backstage actions and support processes

- **Objective:** Coordinate with local wineries for event hosting, involve academic and cultural experts to ensure content accuracy, and manage logistics for activities like the Urban Wine Festival.
- **Activities:** Partner with local businesses for sustainable supplies, train staff and volunteers on environmental practices, and manage digital platforms for effective event promotion. Implement systems for real-time feedback during events to adjust logistics and operations as needed.
- **User Tip:** Establish strong partnerships with local suppliers and experts early in planning. Use technology to streamline communication and logistics, ensuring all activities align with your sustainability goals.

3. Highlighting pain points and opportunities

- **Objective:** Address logistical challenges of coordinating multiple events across various locations and enhance digital engagement to reduce physical travel and resource use.
- **Activities:** Utilise an online project management tool, such as Trello, to monitor and manage event tasks in real time. This platform allows organisers to assign tasks, track progress, and update statuses, ensuring all team members are on the same



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page. It also quickly identifies and addresses any logistical issues, streamlining the coordination of events across different locations. Furthermore, the digital engagement strategy could be expanded to include virtual tours of vineyards, live-streamed panels with winemakers, and interactive sessions on wine tasting, reducing the need for physical travel and enhancing the event's sustainability profile.

- **User Tip:** Leverage technology to improve the efficiency and sustainability of your event. Implementing a digital project management tool can significantly reduce the complexity of managing multiple event components simultaneously. This approach ensures smoother operations and helps reduce the carbon footprint by optimising resource allocation and minimising unnecessary travel.

4. Iterating and implementing changes

- **Objective:** Continuously refine the event based on stakeholder feedback and changing environmental and community needs.
- **Activities:** After each event, conduct thorough reviews using feedback to enhance digital interfaces and expand educational content. Adjust logistical arrangements to support sustainable practices and community involvement better.
- **User Tip:** Maintain flexibility in your event planning to effectively incorporate new ideas and feedback. Regular updates to your service blueprint will help you stay ahead of challenges and ensure your event remains a beacon of sustainable and regenerative tourism.





GLOSSARY

Backstage

Internal processes and actions that occur within an organisation support the frontstage activities but are not seen by the customer.

Blueprint Nodes

Distinct points in the service blueprint where customer actions, frontstage interactions, and backstage processes intersect.

Customer Journey

The complete experience a customer undergoes when interacting with a service, from initial awareness to post-engagement behaviours.

Define

The second stage of the Design Thinking process is where teams synthesise their research and core findings into a clear and actionable problem statement.

Design Sprints

A time-constrained, five-phase process that uses design thinking techniques to reduce the risk when bringing a new product, service, or feature to the market. It helps teams to clearly define goals, validate assumptions, and decide on a product roadmap before starting development.

Design Thinking

A non-linear, iterative process that teams use to understand users,





challenge assumptions, redefine problems, and create innovative solutions to prototype and test.

Empathise

The first stage of the Design Thinking process. It involves gaining an empathetic understanding of the problem at hand, typically through research to understand people's needs, emotions, and motivations.

Feedback Loop

A system in which the outputs of a process are circled back and used as inputs to improve future operations, often involving feedback from users or stakeholders.

Frontstage

Elements of a service that are visible to the customer, including physical environments, customer interactions, and other aspects of the service experience.

Ideate

The third stage of the Design Thinking process. During ideation, teams generate a range of ideas to address the defined problem using creativity and innovation.

Iterative Design

A method of designing and testing a service wherein the process is repeated (iterated) several times to make improvements based on user feedback.

Narrative





A spoken or written account of connected events; a story, especially one that is creatively structured to capture the audience's interest.

Narrative arc

A term used to describe the chronological construction of a plot in a novel or story. Typically, a narrative arc has a beginning, a middle, and an end.

Pain Points

Aspects of the service process that cause inconvenience or dissatisfaction for customers or inefficiencies for the service provider.

Prototype

The fourth stage of the Design Thinking process. A prototype is an experimental model of the idea, allowing designers to visualise an idea and explore its viability.

Service Blueprinting

A tool used in service design to visualise the organisation of processes that comprise a service. It shows both customer-facing (frontstage) and internal (backstage) elements.

Service Prototyping

The process of creating incomplete versions of the service being designed to test hypotheses about interactions and judge reactions from users, typically before full-scale service deployment.

Storytelling



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The act of using narrative to convey a message, share a story, or entertain. In the context of regenerative tourism, storytelling is strategically used to connect visitors with the cultural and environmental aspects of a destination.

Touchpoints

Specific points of interaction between the customer and the service, where services are delivered, and where customers form perceptions of the service quality.

Test

The final stage of the Design Thinking process. Testing involves trying out high-fidelity solutions on a small scale, affirming the problem-solution fit with target users' needs and expectations.





FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1) On implementing Design Sprints in regenerative tourism

Ethical Considerations:

- Prompt: How can Design Sprints ensure that the tourism developments they facilitate are ethically responsible? Consider the impacts on local cultures, economies, and ecosystems.
- Consideration: Reflect on the importance of ethical guidelines in protecting local heritage and natural environments while fostering innovation in tourism.

Balancing Innovation with Tradition:

- Prompt: How can Design Sprints balance innovative tourism development with the preservation of traditional practices and values?
- Consideration: Consider the role of innovation in enhancing traditional practices rather than replacing them, promoting a regenerative approach that respects and revitalises local cultures.

2) On implementing Storytelling in regenerative tourism

Cultural sensitivity and authenticity:

- Prompt: How can storytellers ensure they are being culturally sensitive and authentic when sharing stories from communities not their own?



- Consideration: Reflect on the balance between storytelling as a tool for cultural promotion and the risk of cultural appropriation or misrepresentation.

Impact on the local community:

- Prompt: In what ways might storytelling in tourism impact the local community positively and negatively?
- Consideration: Discuss the potential for storytelling to empower local communities but also consider the challenges it might pose, such as privacy concerns or over-commercialization.

Sustainability of storytelling:

- Prompt: How can the sustainability of storytelling practices be ensured within the tourism industry?
- Consideration: Explore methods to maintain and refresh stories to keep them engaging over time without losing their essence and authenticity.

Digital storytelling in tourism:

- Prompt: What role does digital storytelling play in enhancing regenerative tourism practices?
- Consideration: Consider the benefits and limitations of digital platforms in effectively conveying the depth and nuances of local stories.

Ethical implications:

- Prompt: What are the ethical implications of using storytelling in tourism?
- Consideration: Think about issues such as who gets to tell the



story, who benefits from these stories, and how the revenues from storytelling-driven tourism are distributed within the community.

3) On implementing Service Blueprinting in regenerative tourism

Integration of local knowledge:

- Prompt: How can service blueprinting be adapted to better incorporate traditional and local knowledge, ensuring that tourism services respect and elevate local cultures and practices?
- Consideration: Reflect on the importance of including local stakeholders in the blueprinting process to capture unique cultural insights and practices that could enhance the sustainability and appeal of tourism services.

Balancing efficiency and sustainability:

- Prompt: In what ways might the pursuit of operational efficiency in tourism services conflict with sustainability goals? How can service blueprinting help resolve such conflicts?
- Consideration: Discuss the potential trade-offs between streamlining operations for efficiency and implementing practices that prioritize environmental and social sustainability.

Technological Advancements in Service Blueprinting:

- Prompt: What role could emerging technologies play in enhancing service blueprinting for regenerative tourism? Consider technologies like AI and IoT (Internet of Things).



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- Consideration: Explore the possibilities and challenges of integrating advanced technologies in mapping out service processes, particularly in enhancing real-time data collection and analysis for sustainable practices.

Feedback mechanisms:

- Prompt: How effective are current feedback mechanisms embedded within service blueprints in identifying areas for improvement in regenerative tourism?
- Consideration: Evaluate the effectiveness of existing feedback loops and suggest ways to enhance these mechanisms to better support continuous improvement and adaptation in tourism services.





WORKSHEETS

1. Design Sprints tools

1.1. Empathy Map Worksheet

Purpose: To capture a deeper understanding of the stakeholders involved in regenerative tourism experiences.

Instructions:

- User Group Identification: Identify different user groups involved in the tourism experience (e.g., local community members, tourists, local business owners).
- Think & Feel: What are the main concerns, fears, hopes, and aspirations of these user groups regarding the tourism experience?
- Hear: What are some of the most common opinions or statements made by others that these user groups hear about the experience?
- See: What do these user groups see in their environment related to the tourism experience?
- Say & Do: What actions do these user groups take about the tourism experience? What might they be saying to others?
- Pain Points: What are the biggest frustrations or challenges these user groups face with the tourism experience?
- Gains: What benefits do these user groups most enjoy or look forward to in the tourism experience?



Layout: An empathy map template divided into sections corresponding to each of the above points, with space for notes and observations.

1.2. Problem Definition Template

Purpose: To help pinpoint and articulate the main challenges to address in creating regenerative tourism experiences.

Instructions:

- Problem Statement Development: Based on insights gathered from the Empathy Map, formulate clear problem statements. Start with "How might we..."
- Prioritisation: If multiple problem statements are developed, rank them in order of impact and feasibility.
- Objective Setting: For each problem statement, define what success looks like and how it can be measured.

Layout: Sections for writing problem statements, a matrix for prioritising problems, and fields for defining objectives and success metrics.

1.3. Ideation Session Guide

Purpose: To facilitate the generation of creative and effective solutions to the defined problems.

Instructions:

- Brainstorming Rules: Set the ground rules for brainstorming (e.g., defer judgment, encourage wild ideas).
- Idea Generation: Using techniques like mind mapping or



SCAMPER, generate ideas. Focus on quantity in this phase.

- Idea Categorization: Group ideas into themes or categories to identify patterns and areas of opportunity.
- Selection Criteria: Establish criteria for selecting ideas to prototype (e.g., impact, feasibility, innovation).

Layout: Rules for brainstorming, space for listing ideas, a section for categorising ideas, and criteria for selection.

1.4. Prototype Development Template

Purpose: To plan and create prototypes that can be used to test solutions.

Instructions:

- Prototype Selection: Choose which ideas to prototype based on the criteria set in the Ideation phase.
- Prototype Planning: Detail the key features of the prototype and what it aims to test or demonstrate.
- Materials and Resources: List the materials and resources needed to create the prototype.
- Timeline: Establish a timeline for prototype development.

Layout: Tables and fields for detailing the selected prototype, planning features, listing materials, and setting timelines.

1.5. Feedback Collection Form

Purpose: To collect and organize feedback from testing the prototypes to inform further refinement.

Instructions:



- Feedback Questions: Develop specific questions that address the objectives of the prototype test.
- Observer Notes: Provide space for observers to record their impressions and any notable interactions with the prototype.
- Participant Feedback: Include sections for structured feedback (e.g., surveys) and open-ended feedback.

Layout: Structured question sections, an area for observer notes, and a field for collecting open-ended responses.

2. Storytelling tools

2.1. Story collection worksheet

Purpose: To systematically gather authentic stories from the community that reflect the local culture and heritage.

Instructions:

- Identify storytellers: List potential storytellers, including local elders, winemakers, cultural experts, and community members.
- Prepare questions: Develop open-ended questions that encourage storytellers to share detailed anecdotes, historical facts, personal experiences, and cultural insights.
- Record stories: Use audio, video, or text to capture the stories, ensuring accuracy and authenticity.

Worksheet Sections:

- Storyteller information (Name, Contact, Role)
- Questions prepared
- Summary of story
- Media used (Audio, Video, Text)



- Permissions (Consent to use the story)

Example entry:

- Storyteller: Ivan Petrov, Local Winemaker
- Questions:
 - o Can you tell us about your earliest memory associated with winemaking?
 - o What special story about the Mavrud grape has been passed down in your family?
- Summary: Ivan shared a story about his grandfather's techniques in the vineyard and the legend of the Mavrud grape's origin linked to historical events.
- Media used: Audio recording
- Permissions: The signed consent form is attached

2.2. Narrative crafting template

Purpose: To assist in transforming raw stories into engaging narratives that can be shared with visitors.

Instructions:

- Select key elements: Identify the most compelling elements of each story to include in the narrative.
- Structure the narrative: Organize the content using a narrative arc (Introduction, Climax, Resolution).
- Enhance with descriptive details: Add sensory details and emotional depth to make the narrative vivid and engaging.

Template Sections:

- Selected story elements



- Narrative arc outline
- Final narrative script

Example Entry:

- Selected story elements: Tradition of winemaking, legend of the grape, personal anecdotes
- Narrative arc:
 - o Introduction: Introduction to Ivan and his vineyard
 - o Climax: The legend of how Mavrud Grape saved a town
 - o Resolution: How these traditions are carried on today
- Final narrative script: Full narrative incorporating sensory details and direct quotes from Ivan

2.3. Story Integration Plan

Purpose: To outline how to embed these stories into various tourism activities and materials effectively.

Instructions:

- Select integration points: Determine where stories can be best utilised (tours, digital content, promotional materials).
- Develop story integration strategies: Plan how to present the stories to enhance the visitor's experience.
- Create content: Develop the content needed to integrate the stories, such as scripts for guides, text for brochures, and posts for social media.

Plan sections:

- Integration points
- Strategy for each point



- Content development checklist

Example Entry:

- Integration points: Guided vineyard tour, website, welcome brochure
- Strategy:
 - o Tour: Train guides to narrate the stories at specific points in the vineyard
 - o Website: Feature a monthly story highlight from the community
 - o Brochure: Include a section on local legends with a QR code linking to detailed narratives
- Content development: Scripts for guides, web articles, brochure design

3. Service Blueprint tools

3.1. Service Blueprint worksheet

Purpose: To map out the complete service process, identifying all customer-facing actions and behind-the-scenes support processes.

Instructions:

- Start by listing all customer actions from the beginning to the end of the service experience.
- Identify and document the direct interactions (touchpoints) between the service and the customers.
- Detail the backstage actions and support processes that enable the front-stage activities.



- Mark any potential pain points and opportunities for incorporating regenerative practices.

Worksheet sections:

- Customer actions: Describe each step a customer takes during the service experience.
- Touchpoints: List the interactions between the customer and the service.
- Backstage actions: Detail the internal actions that support customer-facing services.
- Opportunities for improvement: Note areas where sustainable practices can be enhanced.

Example entry:

- Customer action: Attendee arrives at the event and checks in.
- Touchpoint: Reception desk at the entrance of the event.
- Backstage action: Coordination of check-in process by event staff, setup of digital registration systems.
- Opportunities for improvement: Use of electronic tickets to minimise paper use, staff training on efficient and eco-friendly hospitality practices.

2. Pain point and opportunity analysis template

Purpose: To analyse and address specific pain points in the service blueprint, integrating sustainable and regenerative solutions.

Instructions:

- Review the service blueprint to identify any pain points or inefficiencies.



- Brainstorm potential sustainable practices that could address these issues.
- Develop actionable strategies to implement these practices.

Template sections:

- Pain point: Describe the issue or inefficiency.
- Potential sustainable practice: Suggest a sustainable solution.
- Action plan: Outline steps to implement the solution.

Example Entry:

- Pain point: High waste generation at food stalls.
- Potential sustainable practice: Introduction of compostable or reusable food containers.
- Action plan: Partner with local suppliers of compostable materials, and educate vendors and attendees on proper disposal practices.

3. Continuous improvement plan template

Purpose: To establish a systematic approach for continuously refining the service blueprint based on feedback and evolving sustainability goals.

Instructions:

- Set up regular review intervals for the service blueprint.
- Collect and analyse feedback from customers, staff, and other stakeholders.
- Update the blueprint to reflect changes and improvements.

Template sections:



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- Review interval: Frequency of blueprint reviews (e.g., after each event).
- Feedback collection methods: Techniques for gathering feedback (e.g., surveys, focus groups).
- Blueprint updates: Documented changes and rationale.

Example Entry:

- Review interval: Annually, following the main event.
- Feedback collection methods: Online surveys sent to attendees and in-person debriefs with event staff.
- Blueprint updates: Enhancements to digital ticketing processes, and additional training sessions for staff on sustainable practices.



EXTRA RESOURCES

- "Design Thinking for the Greater Good: Innovation in the Social Sector" by Jeanne Liedtka, Randy Salzman, and Daisy Azer
- Interaction Design Foundation (IDF). Their course on "Design Thinking: The Beginner's Guide" is particularly beneficial for those new to the concept.
- IDEO's Guide to Design Thinking: <https://www.ideo.com>
- Service Design Tools: <https://servicedesigntools.org>
- Alexander, Bryan, and Levine, Alan. "Storytelling for the Web: Emerging Best Practices." Educause, 2008.
- The Moth - An acclaimed organisation dedicated to the art and craft of storytelling: <https://themoth.org>
- StoryCorps - An initiative aimed at recording and sharing stories from everyday people, preserving human history through personal anecdotes: <https://storycorps.org>
- National Geographic's Storytelling for Impact - A series of free online courses offered in partnership with the National Geographic Society, focused on using photography, video, and graphics to tell compelling stories:
<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/storytelling-for-impact-videos/>
- "Mapping Experiences: A Guide to Creating Value through Journeys, Blueprints, and Diagrams" by James Kalbach



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